



UNC
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION
AND LIBRARY SCIENCE

INLS 842 SEMINAR IN POPULAR MATERIALS IN LIBRARIES

Spring, 2014

Instructor: Barbara B. Moran

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Class Meetings: Monday , 12:30 to 3:15 in Room 208 Manning Hall

Office Hours: I will be available immediately after almost every class and also be available between 11 and 12 on most Tuesdays. Send me an e-mail if you want to set up an appointment at another time.

One cheats oneself as a human being if one has respect only for the style of high culture.

---Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation*

Rosenberg's First Law of Reading: Never apologize for your reading tastes.

---Betty Rosenberg, *Genreflecting*, 1st Ed.

[I]t is just the literature that we read for "amusement" or "purely for pleasure" that may have the greatest, least suspected, earliest influence on us.

---T.S. Eliot, *Essays Ancient and Modern*

The house of fiction has not one window but a million.

--- Henry James, *The Art of Fiction*

I would be the most content if my children grew up to be the kind of people who think decorating consists mostly of building enough bookshelves.

---Anna Quindlen, *Thinking Out Loud*

“Books to the ceiling, Books to the sky, My pile of books is a mile high.”

---Arnold Lobel

Course Description

The conflict between elite and popular culture has had a long history, and many of the battles have taken place over library collections. Even now, some librarians still see libraries as cultural bastions, which should acquire and maintain only "high quality" materials. However, all public libraries and an increasing number of academic libraries now consider that providing readers with books for pleasure reading is a major part of their mission.

This course will examine the place of popular materials within society and, specifically, within libraries. The course will provide students with an overview of a variety of mass media with the greatest attention being paid to popular literature. The relationship of popular materials and libraries will be discussed. The major genres of popular literature will be examined in depth. Attention will be given to the bibliographic sources and the problems of acquisition, storage, dissemination, and preservation of popular materials. Students will also learn about the increasingly important role of "readers' advisor" in libraries and how readers' advisors can help connect readers to the type of literature they wish to read.

Course Objectives

To give students an awareness of the various types of popular material and their importance in many types of libraries. Students will have the opportunity to read and become familiar with many types of popular material genres. They will examine the role played by reader advisors in library and learn techniques for matching patrons and popular materials and for building popular material collections. Student will learn how to prepare and deliver a booktalk. Finally, the presentation on one type of genre fiction will provide students with an opportunity to in examine a specific area of popular culture in depth and gain experience in communicating that knowledge to an audience.

Textbooks And Readings

There is one required text for this course: Saricks, Joyce G. *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*, 2nd ed. ALA, 2009. This book gives an excellent overview of the many types of genre fiction.

Other readings will be found on reserve in the SILS library, in journals in the SILS or Davis library, or on Internet sites.

Much of the class reading will be student selected from the various genres. Your local public library will be a likely source of many of these books but in addition both the Davis and Undergraduate Library's Browsing Collections are good sources. I also have a bookcase outside of my office filled with many types of genre paperback books which you are welcome to borrow and use.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades will be based on the following criteria (weights in parenthesis):
More about each of these assignments can be found in the Assignments section of Blackboard

Two Brief Papers	20% each
Classroom Presentation	20 %
Final Paper	30%
Class Participation—including one book talk and participation in the Discussion Forums	10%

The assignments, presentations, and class participation will be graded on the following scale:

H	95-100%
P	80- 94%
L	70- 79%
F	69% and below.

Incompletes: A grade of incomplete may be taken only because of illness or special circumstances and only with the permission of the instructor.

Honor System

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. Because academic honesty and the development and nurturing of trust and trustworthiness are important to all of us as individuals, and are encouraged and promoted by the honor system, this is a most significant University tradition. The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty shares the responsibility and readily recommit ourselves to its ideals. If students in this class have questions about their responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to me or consult with the Office of the Dean of Students or the *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance*. This document contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. I encourage your full participation and observance of this important aspect of the University.

Course Policies and Requirements

- I. Class participation is encouraged and expected. You are expected to participate

in class and group discussions and activities and in the class listserv and discussion forums on the Web.

2. Reading assignments should be done before class to ensure better discussions and questions.
 3. Assignments should be turned in at the beginning of the class on the day they are due.
 4. You are expected to attend all classes or notify me if you are unavoidably absent.
 5. If there is something you don't understand, ask a question. If you don't understand, it is probable that others in the class also do not. If you don't want to ask during class, send me an e-mail or come by my office.
 6. The Honor Code described above is in effect in this class. If you have a question about how certain activities, especially group activities, might be interpreted under the Honor Code please ask me.
 7. A grade of incomplete may be taken only because of illness or special circumstances and only with the permission of the instructor.
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